THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Necessary approvals are being obtained for certain identified rail projects, the cost of which is to be shared equally by Minister of Railways and the Government of Andhra Pradesh?

Railway Reservation Counter in Leh

3908. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Railway Reservation counter has been opened recently in Leh, the highest in the world, which has especially helped the soldiers posted in the region;

(b) whether the Government would start some more such reservation counters in remote places of Jammu and Kashmir and in the North-Eastern region;

(c) if so, how many reservation counters were opened in the last two years;

(d) how many such centres are proposed to be set up in the near future; and

(e) the names of such centres referred to in parts (c) and (d) above State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Computerized Reservation centers have been opened at six locations in Jammu & Kashmir and North East region during the last two years.

(d) Computerized Reservation centers are proposed to be set up at four new locations in the near future.

(e) Name of the locations where Computerized Reservation facilities were provided during the last two years are: Udhampur, Leh in Jammu & Kashmir and Tejpur, Bongaigaon, Jorhat and Lumding in Assam.

The locations where Computerized Reservation facilities are

proposed to be provided in near future are Dispur, Rangia, Karimganj and Mariani in Assam.

Conversion of Kolar-Chkkaballapur MG Line

3909. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of RAIL WAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether conversion of Kolar-Chikkaballapur MG Rail line into BG is pending consideration with the Railways and the project has not been included in the Budgets during the last three years;

(b) if so, whether the matter was considered for inclusion in the Budget 2001-2002, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when the proposal is likely to be considered, in view of the heavy traffic on this route?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) A survey for conversion of the narrow gauge rail line from Kolar to Chickkballapur was conducted in 2000. As per the survey report the cost of conversion of the 87 km. long line was assessed as Rs.53.45 crore with negative rate of return. Due to unremunerative nature of the line and constraint of resources, it has not been found feasible to consider the proposal for the present.

Helplessness of Railway about safety factors

3910. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that, as per a recent press report, a Senior Railway Board Member (Traffic) has gone on record to say that due to shortage of funds, safety factors are getting squeezed, as maintenance and replacements are not carried out in time;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some statistics quoted that 76 per cent accidents are due to derailments and human errors and there are 2000 rail fractures and 3000 weld failures per year and the Railways do not have the means to check these faults, and are thereby unable to take preventive action; and